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President: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 166

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Report of the Secretary-General (A/56/160 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 3rd plenary meeting, on 14 September 2001, the General Assembly decided to hold the initial debate on this item in the plenary, on the understanding that the consideration of the technical aspects of the item will remain in the Sixth Committee.

I should like to make a brief statement.

We meet today almost three weeks after the worst terrorist assault in the history of the world. I know I speak for all of us in conveying once again my deepest sympathy and condolences to the families and loved ones of the more than 6,000 innocent victims.

As stated in Security Council resolution 1368 (2001) of 12 September and reaffirmed by its resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September, these vicious attacks, unprecedented in scale and brutality, pose a direct threat to international peace and security. More than that, these actions were aimed not just at physical targets, but indeed at the very structure of the civilized values — peace, freedom, tolerance and human rights — around which the international community is organized.

The General Assembly responded to this challenge with alacrity and spoke in strong, unmistakable tones. On the very first day of the session, 12 September, the Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 56/1, condemning the most heinous terrorist attacks and calling for greater international cooperation to prevent and eventually eradicate international terrorism. I am confident that our meetings during the next few days will provide a timely impetus for achieving the objectives set forth in resolution 56/1.

In fact, the issue of international terrorism has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for many years. An important step was taken in 1994 when the Assembly adopted the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism. In 1996, the Assembly adopted a Declaration to Supplement the 1994 Declaration and established an Ad Hoc Committee to address the issue. This Ad Hoc Committee, along with a working group of the Sixth Committee, was given a mandate to elaborate draft conventions against international terrorism.

In recent years, the Assembly has contributed to the development of a comprehensive legal framework of anti-terrorism conventions by adopting two key instruments. They are the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted by Assembly resolution 52/164, which entered into force on 23 May this year, and the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by Assembly resolution 54/109, which so far has gained

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45 signatories and four ratifications, requiring 18 additional ratifications before its entry into force.

Based on such progress in building an effective international framework for combating terrorism, the Member States are now discussing a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. This convention, once finalized, along with the existing 12 anti-terrorist conventions dealing with various aspects of terrorism, will greatly enhance the ability of the international community to combat terrorism in all its forms. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to urge the Member States to strengthen their efforts to achieve an early conclusion of the comprehensive convention. At the same time, I wish to encourage those Member States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the existing conventions as soon as possible.

Last but not least, I want to emphasize that the fight against terrorism is an issue that transcends cultural and religious differences, while terrorism itself threatens people of all cultures and religious faiths. We must never forget that terrorism is not a weapon wielded by one civilization against another, but rather an instrument of destruction through which small bands of criminals seek to undermine civilization itself.

The United Nations has designated this year as the Year of Dialogue among Civilizations. Terrorism is one of the gravest and most urgent of many international issues that can be effectively addressed only in the spirit of intercultural dialogue. Through such dialogue, the peoples of the world can unite around their common interests and shared values, so many of which are directly menaced by international terrorism.

Nothing can make amends for the senseless loss of life on 11 September, but I hope that this unspeakable tragedy will serve to strengthen our resolve to one day eliminate the threat of international terrorism once and for all.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: On Friday night, the Security Council adopted unanimously a broad resolution aimed at targeting terrorists and those who harbour, aid or support them. That resolution requires Member States to cooperate in a wide range of areas, from suppressing the financing of terrorism to providing early warning, cooperating in criminal investigations and exchanging information on possible terrorist acts. I applaud the Council for acting so swiftly to enshrine in law the first steps needed to carry this fight forward with new vigour and determination.

Now all Member States must make greater efforts to exchange information about practices that have proved effective and lessons that have been learned in the fight against terrorism so that a global standard of excellence can be set. The implementation of this resolution will require technical expertise at the national level. I encourage States that can offer assistance in this regard to do so — and to do so generously — and without delay.

Thus far, the international community has been able to act with unprecedented speed and unity. On 12 September, both the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted strong resolutions condemning the attacks and calling on all States to cooperate in bringing the perpetrators to justice. Now, a second and more detailed resolution has been adopted by the Security Council, building swiftly on the first. Today, this Assembly meets to deliberate its own response to the events of 11 September.

The reason for this response and unprecedented unity is clear. The terrorist attacks against the United States, resulting in the deaths of some 6,000 people from 80 countries, were acts of terrible evil which shocked the conscience of the entire world.

But out of evil can come good. Paradoxically, these vicious assaults on our common humanity have had the effect of reaffirming our common humanity. The very heartlessness and callous indifference to the suffering and grief caused to thousands of innocent families has brought a heartfelt response from millions of ordinary people all over the world in many different societies.

The task now is to build on that wave of human solidarity to ensure that the momentum is not lost and to develop a broad, comprehensive and above all sustained strategy to combat terrorism and eradicate it from our world.

This important meeting of the General Assembly has a critical role to play in this. It must not be merely symbolic. It must signal the beginning of immediate, practical and far-reaching changes in the way this Organization and its Member States act against terrorism.

Today, the shock of this crime has united the world, but if we are to prevent such crimes from being committed again, we must stay united as we seek to eliminate terrorism. In this struggle, there is simply no alternative to international cooperation. Terrorism will be defeated if the international community summons the will to unite in a broad coalition, or it will not be defeated at all. The United Nations is uniquely positioned to serve as the forum for this coalition, and for the development of those steps Governments must now take — separately and together — to fight terrorism on a global scale.

The global reaction to the attacks should give us courage and hope that we can succeed in this fight. The sight of people from every religion gathering in cities in every part of the world to mourn, and to express solidarity with the people of the United States, proves more eloquently than any words that terrorism is not an issue that divides humanity, but one that unites it. We are in a moral struggle to fight an evil that is anathema to all faiths. Every State and every people has a part to play. This was an attack on humanity, and humanity must respond to it as one.

The urgent business of the United Nations must now be to develop a long-term strategy in order to ensure global legitimacy for the struggle ahead. The legitimacy that the United Nations conveys can ensure that the greatest number of States are able and willing to take the necessary and difficult steps — diplomatic, legal and political — that are needed to defeat terrorism.

The Member States that are represented here have a clear agenda before them. It begins with ensuring that the 12 conventions and protocols on international terrorism, already drafted and adopted under United Nations auspices, are signed, ratified and implemented without delay by all States.

Two of these conventions, in particular, can strengthen the fight against terrorism. First, the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, which entered into force on 23 May this year; and, secondly, the 1999 Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which so far has 44 signatories and four ratifications. It requires 18 additional ratifications to enter into force, and I hope it will now be seen as a point of honour for Member States to ratify this vital Convention as soon possible.

While no one imagines that these conventions, even when implemented, will end terrorism on their own, they are part of the legal framework needed for this effort. I wish to propose to all Member States that they make it their first order of business during the general debate to sign all the conventions on terrorism and pledge to work for their ratification and implementation without delay.

It will also be important to obtain agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. In the post-11 September era, no one can dispute the nature of the terrorist threat or the need to meet it with a global response. I understand that there are outstanding issues, which until now have prevented agreement on the convention. Some of the most difficult issues relate to the definition of terrorism. I understand and accept the need for legal precision. But let me say frankly that there is also a need for moral clarity. There can be no acceptance of those who would seek to justify the deliberate taking of innocent civilian life, regardless of cause or grievance. If there is one universal principle that all peoples can agree on, surely it is that.

Even in situations of armed conflict, the targeting of innocent civilians is illegal, as well as morally unacceptable. Yet, as I have stated in my two reports on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, civilian populations are more and more often deliberately targeted. Indeed, civilians have become the principal victims of conflict, accounting for an estimated 75 per cent of all casualties.

This demands from all of us an increased attention to the civilian costs of conflict. It requires Member States to live up to their responsibilities under international law. They must deal firmly with the reality of armed groups and other non-State actors that refuse to respect common principles of human dignity.

It is hard to imagine how the tragedy of 11 September could have been worse. Yet the truth is that a single attack involving a nuclear or biological weapon could have killed millions. While the world was unable to prevent the 11 September attacks, there is much we can do to help prevent future terrorist acts carried out with weapons of mass destruction. The greatest danger arises from a non-State group, or even an individual, acquiring and using a nuclear, biological or chemical weapon. Such a weapon could be delivered

without the need for any missile or any other sophisticated delivery system.

In addition to measures taken by individual Member States, we must now strengthen the global norm against the use or proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This means, among other actions, redoubling efforts to ensure the universality, verification and full implementation of key treaties relating to weapons of mass destruction, including those outlawing chemical and biological weapons, and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; promoting cooperation among international organizations dealing with such weapons; tightening national legislation over exports of goods and technologies needed to manufacture weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; and developing new efforts to criminalize the acquisition or use of weapons of mass destruction by non-State groups.

In addition, we need to strengthen controls over other types of weapons that pose grave dangers through terrorist use. This means doing more to ensure a ban on the sale of small arms to non-State groups; making progress in eliminating landmines; improving the physical protection of sensitive industrial facilities, including nuclear and chemical plants; and increased vigilance against cyber-terrorist threats.

As we summon the will and the resources to succeed in the struggle against terrorism, we must also care for all the victims of terrorism, whether they are the direct targets or other populations who will be affected by our common effort. That is why I have launched an alert to donors about the potential need for much more generous humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan.

This appeal is only the most urgent part of our determination to continue to care for those suffering from poverty, disease and conflict around the world. The work of the United Nations in promoting development, resolving long-standing disputes and fighting ignorance and prejudice are even more important today than they were before 11 September.

The victims of the attacks on 11 September were, first and foremost, the innocent civilians who lost their lives and the families who now grieve for them. But peace, tolerance, mutual respect, human rights, the rule of law and the global economy are all among the casualties of the terrorists' acts.

In conclusion, let me say that repairing the damage done to the fabric of the international community — restoring trust among peoples and cultures — will not be easy. But just as a concerted international response can make the work of terrorists much harder to accomplish, so should the unity born of this tragedy bring all nations together in defence of the most basic right: the right of all peoples to live in peace and security. This is the challenge before us as we seek to eliminate the evil of terrorism.

The President: I should like to inform Members that in a letter dated 28 September 2001, addressed to the President of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, in his capacity as chairman of the Group of Western European and other States for the month of September, requests that the General Assembly hear in plenary meeting a statement by the observer of Switzerland in the debate on agenda item 166, "Measures to eliminate international terrorism". In view of the importance attached to the issue under discussion, it is proposed that the General Assembly should take a decision on that request.

May I take it that there is no objection to the proposal to hear a statement by the observer of Switzerland in the debate on this item?

It was so decided.

The President: Before giving the floor to the first speaker on the list of speakers for this item, I should like to recall for the Assembly's attention that in the report contained in document A/56/250, the General Committee drew the attention of the Assembly to paragraph 22 of the annex to resolution 51/241, which states,

> "Outside the general debate, there shall be a fifteen-minute time limit in plenary meetings and in the Main Committees."

As delegates may know by now, there are at this point 156 speakers already inscribed on the list for this item. In order that we may hear all the speakers in good time and to avoid meetings late at night, it will be most helpful if speakers do their utmost to limit their statements to less than 15 minutes, and preferably to 10 minutes. This will facilitate our consideration of this item in a timely manner and help us maintain our programme of work for this week. I honestly ask for the cooperation of all.

May I also remind the Assembly that the ringing of cellular phones in the Hall disturbs the proceedings of the plenary. Therefore, I would like to advise representatives once again to turn off cellular phones or to switch them to courtesy mode.

Mr. Aguirre Sacasa (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before I begin, President Han, allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I am certain that your personal capability and professional competence will successfully guide us during this session. At the same time, I wish to express our appreciation of and gratitude to the Republic of Korea for its profound friendship with Nicaragua.

I also wish to commend your predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri of Finland, for the excellent work he did during the fifty-fifth session. Likewise, I wish to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, who was re-elected to a second mandate, thanks to his dedication and the great talent with which he has directed our Organization.

Last night in the wind and rain, I walked the streets of this great metropolis, which, as a sign I saw read, has been hit but not destroyed by the events of 11 September. I also visited in a subway station one of the walls of mourning that the people have spontaneously assembled to recognize, remember and keep vigil for the thousands of missing persons. That was the first time that I fully understood and felt the enormity and horror of 11 September and the necessity of preventing events like that from happening again.

Ambassador Negroponte, I want you to know that the people and the Government of Nicaragua share the suffering of the people and the Government of the United States, and that we are completely at your side, ready to do anything within our modest reach to eradicate forever the accursed scourge of terrorism.

A few minutes ago, we listened to the moving words of The Honourable Rudolph Giuliani, who personifies the invincible spirit not only of New York City but also of all the people of the United States of America. His excellent work in the face of the recent emergency deserves our highest recognition, as do the brave members of the Fire Department, Police Department and rescue teams for the exemplary determination they have shown and the ultimate sacrifice they have made.

The eyes of the world were fixed on this city, watching, almost live, the entire tragedy of 11 September. I was in Lima at a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of our hemisphere when those savage images were engraved in my memory forever. I will always remember the courage and selflessness with which the American people, and especially New Yorkers, were able to deal with this tragedy, in which more than 6,000 innocent people lost their lives — among them hundreds of Central Americans — some of them while fighting heroically to save other lives.

The gravity of these criminal acts has imposed on us new and greater challenges, which we need to face united. In that regard, Nicaragua considers that all the Members of the United Nations need to apply a coordinated strategy that will make us effective in our battle against international terrorism.

We must be aware that we now face a common enemy, an enemy that operates clandestinely, in cowardly fashion but with great sophistication, an enemy frequently linked in suspicious ways to other transnational crimes, such as drug trafficking, money laundering and the diverse forms of organized crime that facilitate and finance the commission of these criminal acts.

For this reason, in order to safeguard security for humanity and the fundamental values of our civilization, we need to press forward, to rise without hesitation from this trial and to strengthen cooperation in order to declare together a world war on terrorism, a common enemy of all peoples, of all beliefs and religions and of peace and democracy. This is our duty. This, I repeat, is an imperative for the community of nations.

The first step towards winning the war against terrorism is not to allow ourselves to be frightened by its actions. For this reason, Nicaragua decided to proceed with the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Use, Storage, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction, held in Managua from 17 to 21 September, despite other international conferences around the world being cancelled. Nicaragua decided to go ahead with the meeting because we did not want to surrender to terrorism; we did not want to allow ourselves to be cornered by these sinister forces that attempt to interrupt normality, paralyze us and turn us into hostages of fear, all in the name of causes that are

presented as being noble objectives. We were very happy to receive the more than 90 delegations that had to make tremendous sacrifices and efforts to reach Managua wishing to express their firm support for peace, peaceful solutions to conflicts and to demonstrate their commitment to the millions of citizens who live in countries such as ours affected by the presence of anti-personnel mines.

Nicaragua has committed itself to being implacable against terrorism. We are taking concrete measures, because we are not going to allow our territory to be used as a platform for committing such abominable acts as took place on 11 September.

More specifically, in order to give a resounding "NO" to terrorism, we have taken the following actions: first, our President, Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo, held an emergency meeting with his Central American counterparts this past 19 September in Honduras to endorse the Central America United Against Terrorism Declaration in which the countries of the isthmus strongly condemned any link between groups or sectors of the Central American region and international terrorism, and defined immediate actions such as strengthening the information- and intelligence-exchange mechanisms, strengthening border security, strengthening control of migratory flows, reforming penal legislation to make association with terrorist groups or persons criminal, freezing and eventually confiscating the financial resources of terrorist networks or groups — one of the key points that was mentioned by Mayor Giuliani — and ensuring the full force of all international instruments pertaining to this matter.

Secondly, as the host of the Third Conference of the States Parties of the Ottawa Treaty, Nicaragua promoted a declaration with an energetic condemnation of the horrible terrorist attacks of 11 September, in which we urged all countries to work together to bring to justice the perpetrators of these despicable acts, as well as those who assist and support them. We also appealed to the international community to augment the efforts to frustrate terrorism through an increase in cooperation and the full implementation of international conventions and Security Council resolutions, including the Council resolution of 12 September 2001 and that of the General Assembly of the same day.

At the Organization of American States (OAS), Nicaragua co-sponsored the Brazilian initiative to convene immediately the organ of Consultation of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. In keeping with this position, Nicaragua joined the States of the hemisphere in approving concrete measures against terrorism, among them the creation of a draft for the inter-American convention against terrorism, with the aim of protecting our common values and the right of our citizens to live in peaceful and secure surroundings.

Lastly, this past 27 September, at a meeting of the Central American Security Commission, the countries of the isthmus agreed to create new mechanisms of security and coordination between the armed forces, immigration and police institutions of Central America in order to present a united front against terrorism.

I wish to recall that the ideal that brings us together in this Headquarters is none other than to combine our efforts for the benefit of humanity to eradicate the terrorist threat. There is no doubt that this evil has advanced to use more destructive forms. But we cannot allow more innocent human beings to perish; we cannot allow terrorists to sow desperation, fear and anxiety. For this reason, as you, Mr. Secretary-General, recently affirmed, "the United Nations must have the courage to recognize that just as there are common aims, there are common enemies". In this scenario, there is no room to be neutral. No one can remain passive or indifferent.

For this reason, Nicaragua supports the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, for which negotiations were initiated based on the draft presented by the Government of India, an initiative which we consider extremely important. Equally, we are very satisfied with and fully support resolution 1373 (2001), which was unanimously adopted last Friday by the Security Council, and which establishes a wide-ranging framework for combating all aspects of terrorism.

Nicaragua supports the considerations of the United Nations Secretary-General, who has recognized our Organization as the natural forum for building a universal coalition, giving long-term global legitimacy to the fight against terrorism.

Nevertheless, the universal calling of our Organization cannot be complete as long as there is a State with profound democratic roots that cannot

participate as a full member in the work of the United Nations system. I am referring to the Republic of China, Taiwan. Like all the citizens of the world, its 23 million inhabitants suffer the effects of terrorism and should, in the United Nations, add their own experience, technology and actions to the universal efforts against these acts that threaten world peace and the security of all peoples.

May I refer to the efforts that my own country has undertaken to build a political system based on the values of full respect for democracy, leaving behind the culture of violence as a means of resolving our differences. In this respect, I would like to emphasize that the next presidential election to be held in my country, on 4 November, will be the third consecutive, free and democratic presidential election in our history, once again giving evidence of the growing political maturity of the Nicaraguan people and their firm desire to continue the destiny of the nation on the path of democracy.

We have initiated the preparations for these elections with the certainty that they will be a transcendental step in strengthening our young democracy. Nevertheless, to ensure the transparency and the credibility of this process, we have invited many of the countries represented here to send electoral observer missions. This morning I want to reiterate this invitation and to thank the countries that have already decided to send observers to participate with the Nicaraguans in this joyful civic exercise.

In conclusion, Nicaragua, which has been the victim of war, with its aftermath of pain and suffering, shares the mourning of the families of the victims of 11 September, and we harbour the hope that with their unbreakable faith in the future, they will be able to recover from this tragedy.

The cold-blooded murder of many innocent people and the wave of fear caused by these terrorists throughout the world show us the need to fight in unity against the scourge of terrorism. We should, I repeat, declare a world war against it.

Our aim should be to carry out joint actions in the framework of our universal Organization, in order to give no respite or quarter, in order not to allow negotiation or discussion on a right of all humankind: the right to live free of the fear of terrorism.

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): This session of the General Assembly, as members all know, was meant to implement the Millennium Declaration, issued one year ago this month. In it, we declared certain fundamental values to be essential to international relations in the twenty-first century: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility.

Everyone here has stood in my place, making his or her first remarks to the General Assembly, so I am sure all can well understand how pleased I would have been to address these inspiring themes. With the breach between the United States Congress and the President over how to best support the United Nations now healed, I could have used my time with the Assembly this morning to describe the United States renewed commitment to a world reborn in the spirit of peace and cooperation. That is a speech I am committed to deliver, I assure the Assembly, but not today.

Tragically, the heinous terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 have led us, all of us, not to the Millennium Declaration but back to our original declaration of 25 June 1945. We expressed our political will then in terms that were firm and clear, and I would be hard pressed to improve upon them. But if I may add a single word to the preamble of the Charter of this great body, let me say that "We the peoples of the United Nations remain determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

The barbarities of 11 September — the unspeakable loss of life, the destruction of the World Trade Center, the suicidal flight into the walls of the Pentagon, the horrifying crash of a commercial airliner in a field in Pennsylvania — were very different from the scourge of war our predecessors knew and pledged to end, but they were acts of war nonetheless. And as President Bush has said, we will meet this violence with justice that is patient, but "whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done".

On 11 September, the world witnessed the final transformation of terror from agony to crisis. We knew we had cancer. Now we know it has metastasized. The Al-Qaeda terrorist network reached into the very systems of cooperation and communication that we have painstakingly established to bring the world closer together — from civil aviation to telecommunications, to the transfer of money, to the

free movement of people — and turned the building blocks of peace into weapons of war. Men suicidally intoxicated with a vision of the void perverted the basic elements of civilized life and dared call their deeds the works of God. Some power possessed them, but not a higher power; some power that rendered the impact of these assaults exponentially greater than anything we have ever witnessed before; some power that is the dark antithesis of the light we all want to see at the dawn of the new millennium.

The attacks of 11 September took place within the territory of the United States, but the grief has spread far beyond our borders. My delegation is not the only one that mourns. Scores of nations lost their citizens, their brothers and sisters, their parents and their children. Our deepest sympathies go to all of them. And let me say that the offers of support we have received in return — specially trained Asian firefighters, European burn teams, Latin American urban rescuers, Arab physicians and African trauma managers — have touched the people of the United States deeply.

As we meet here today, I know all present join me in asking, "What more can we do?" "What more must we do?" Despite the urgency and the anger we feel, some answers to those questions will take time in coming. After all, 11 September is only a few weeks past. But more than time — and this is the heart of my message to members today — the answers to those questions will require the sustained application of political will, a vital commitment to one another that infuses all of the measures that we take today and will give us the courage to undertake unforeseeable actions tomorrow. I know we can muster that political will because the General Assembly and the Security Council both showed it in their swift resolutions of 12 September: an unprecedented manifestation of our collective outrage and condemnation.

The struggle we face will be lengthy. Its progress will be erratic. Already we see heartening results through effective law enforcement around the world, but this war will not be over until we shatter the global terrorists' ability to share information, techniques, personnel, money, and weapons. And as we dismantle the terrorists' ability to leverage their resources by cross-border subterfuge, we must also shut down their activities in each and every Member State. We cannot let them act together; we cannot let them act alone; we cannot let them act at all.

Three days ago the Security Council spelled out our immediate tasks in resolution 1373 (2001). It is an urgent call to action. All of us must emphasize to our Governments the critical need to implement the measures it mandates. Resolution 1373 (2001) goes to the heart of how terrorism operates — it will deny the terrorists financing, safe haven and other forms of support; the Security Council itself will closely monitor its implementation. Yes, resolution 1373 (2001) will impose on all of us the highest standards of vigilance, but vigilance is the price of freedom. And freedom, the first value of the new millennium, is worth the price of vigilance and more.

President Bush has made our policy clear:

> "We will direct every resource at our command — every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war — to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network."

The United States, like all members, has the right to defend itself. But we do not feel alone in our struggle, and we are not proceeding alone. In this great house of nations, we have many friends. We know that.

We also know that the war we wage is not a battle against Islam. The terrorists we confront cannot deceive us by attempting to wrap themselves in Islam's glorious mantle. Islam's great leaders and scholars tell us otherwise. Our own history and experience tell us otherwise. We helped defend Muslims in Kuwait. We helped defend Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo. We remain the largest single provider of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. There are over 1,200 mosques and 2 million Muslims in the United States, and their faith is a gift we revere and cherish. So we must be prepared to repeat again and again the simple truth: there is no division between the United States and Islam; the division that exists is between the civilized world and terror, between the rule of law and the chaos of crime, between a world at peace and a world in peril.

I have spent my adult life as a diplomat, much of the time abroad, but I lived here in New York from childhood until I was 21. I lived here during the Second World War. I lived here during the Korean War. And I lived here during some of the worst moments of the cold war. During those difficult times we New Yorkers came to believe that we had a special relationship with the world through the vision of men

like Churchill and Roosevelt, Hammarskjöld and U Thant. What they dreamed, and what they built, right here in my hometown, was an institution that rejected conflict and embraced cooperation.

Now our spirit of cooperation is going to be tested. In the months and perhaps years ahead, we often will be frustrated, we often will be disappointed. But you, too, live in the city where the tragedy was greatest. You, too, have seen this disaster with your own eyes, and you know there is no way to prevent such a thing happening again unless we make common cause. Justice demands that global terrorism be silenced so that the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations can be heard. Through shared responsibility, the last of the Millennium Declaration's fundamental values, I am sure that goal will be achieved.

Mr. de Ruyt (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries of Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this statement.

Allow me first of all, Mr. President and Mr. Secretary-General, to commend you for giving us the opportunity to address this issue today, which mobilizes us all within this Assembly.

The terrorist attacks perpetrated in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania on 11 September are an assault not only on the United States, but on all our open, democratic, tolerant and multicultural societies. They are a challenge to the conscience of every human being. The Union condemns with the utmost forcefulness the perpetrators and sponsors of these barbarous acts and reaffirms its complete solidarity with the American Government and people in the face of these attacks. This condemnation is, furthermore, unanimous, as demonstrated by the actions already taken in our Organization, such as resolution 56/1 and Security Council resolution 1368 (2001), adopted the day after the attacks, as well as Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted last Friday. The Union and its member States will be unstinting in their efforts to help identify, bring to justice and punish those responsible for these heinous acts and their accomplices. The Union will cooperate closely with the United States and the entire international community to combat international terrorism.

Terrorism is a real challenge to the whole world. Combating it also means ensuring respect for democracy. The heads of State and Government of the European Union, meeting in extraordinary session on 21 September 2001, decided to make the fight against terrorism a priority of the Union. It will step up its action against terrorism through a coordinated and interdisciplinary approach embracing all Union policies. It will ensure that that approach is reconciled with respect for the fundamental freedoms that form the basis of all civilization. Moreover, this fight against terrorism should be coupled with the search for sustainable solutions for the human and political tragedies that are factors in the instability that feeds terrorists groups.

The fight against terrorism requires the broadest possible global coalition. That coalition should be formed under the auspices of the United Nations, which remains the most appropriate forum for revitalizing and strengthening our coordinated efforts to eliminate international terrorism. The United Nations and its specialized agencies have in the past successfully elaborated a series of sectoral anti-terrorist conventions which, taken together, constitute the international legal framework for combating terrorism. In particular, there are 12 conventions which cover specific categories of terrorist acts. The most recent instruments are the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted respectively in 1997 and 1999.

Eradicating international terrorism will be possible only if all countries are unreservedly committed to the fight. Universal accession to anti-terrorist conventions is essential. It is therefore crucial that all States become parties to those conventions as a matter of urgency.

The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism is especially important. Combating the funding of terrorism is a key aspect of European anti-terrorism policy. Vigorous international action is needed to ensure that the fight is completely effective. To that end, the European Union has decided to take all necessary measures to combat all forms of

financing of terrorist activities. Those measures follow the spirit of the provisions adopted in that regard by the Security Council in its very important resolution 1373 (2001). The European Council has called on the States members of the European Union to sign and ratify, as a matter of urgency, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Measures will be taken against uncooperative countries and territories identified by the Financial Action Task Force.

The international legal framework of anti-terrorist conventions is solid, but it contains loopholes and gaps which must be closed. To that end, the special Sixth Committee working group and the Ad Hoc Committee established by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/210 were requested by the Assembly to elaborate a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The European Union thanks India for taking the initiative to present a proposal to that end, and calls upon all Member States to work together to arrive at a satisfactory outcome on the unresolved questions. It underlines once again that such a comprehensive convention should bring added value to the existing sectoral conventions, in particular by filling the gaps while preserving their achievements. The European Union also calls on Member States to conclude the negotiations on a draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted in 2000, and its Protocols, are an important addition to the fight against terrorism. Although the Convention does not specifically address terrorism, it deals with financial crime, money laundering and corruption. Those wide-ranging provisions will unquestionably assist the international community in its fight against terrorism by preventing and combating criminal activity in support of terrorism. I should like to point out here that all the States members of the European Union have signed the Convention.

We take note of the adoption on 6 September of the revised draft plans of action for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice, a chapter of which is devoted to specific recommendations for national and international action against terrorism. We support the adoption of the draft plans by the General Assembly.

Clearly, the implementation of these conventions is just as important as their ratification. The European Union calls on all countries to take the measures necessary to implement these instruments as a matter of urgency. It also asks the States Members of the United Nations to consider possible ways to introduce a mechanism for monitoring their implementation in the United Nations framework. We attach great importance to this kind of monitoring mechanism and we note with interest that such a monitoring instrument was established by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001 in order to ensure the full implementation of that resolution.

In the meantime, the European Union considers that it would be useful to give a higher profile to the Secretariat's annual report on the status and implementation of multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements on international terrorism. The European Union intends to ask the Secretariat to publish that report on the United Nations web site.

In addition to such efforts, the United Nations must continue to explore other ways of combating terrorism. Until now, the emphasis has been, quite rightly, on judicial cooperation in prosecuting and extraditing those guilty of terrorist acts in all their aspects. Other forms of cooperation could be envisaged or strengthened, for instance in the areas of preventive measures and exchange of information. Furthermore, we are convinced that the integration of all countries into a fair world system of security, prosperity and improved development is a condition for a community that will be strong and sustained in its fight against terrorism. The fight against the scourge of terrorism will be all the more effective if it is based on an in-depth political dialogue with all the world's countries and regions. In that regard, conflict prevention should more than ever be a priority on the international agenda.

The prospect of seeing terrorists acquire means of mass destruction is among the most terrifying of all. The international community must increase its efforts to intensify cooperation on non-proliferation regimes for nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

The European Union considers that strengthening international cooperation must go hand in hand with strengthening regional cooperation. It calls for strengthened regional cooperation in the fight against international terrorism, as a matter of urgency. In that

regard, the European Council has adopted a plan of action aimed at bolstering European policies to combat terrorism in various fields. Here, strengthening judicial and police cooperation is a crucial element. The European Council has agreed to establish a European arrest warrant and to adopt a common definition of terrorism. The European warrant will replace existing extradition arrangements among European Union member States and will allow wanted persons to be handed over directly from one judicial authority to another. Fundamental rights and freedoms will be guaranteed. The detailed arrangements for that agreement will be finalized soon, in December 2001.

In parallel with strengthening judicial cooperation, measures have also been taken to strengthen police cooperation. In particular, the European Council has called for the identification of presumed terrorists in Europe and of organizations supporting them, with a view to drawing up a common list of terrorist organizations. European Union member States will also share with the European Police Office (EUROPOL), systematically and without delay, all useful information on terrorism. Within EUROPOL, a team of anti-terrorism specialists will be set up as soon as possible.

The European Council has decided that measures should be taken to increase air transport security. These will relate to weapons classification, technical training of crews, baggage checks, protection of cockpit access, and monitoring the quality of the security measures taken by member States. In particular, the effective and uniform application of air security measures will be ensured by reciprocal checks, which will be set up without delay.

The members of the European Council have appealed to the international community to pursue dialogue and negotiation in all multilateral forums with a view to building, in Europe and elsewhere, a world in which peace, tolerance and the rule of law will prevail. In that respect, we would also like to stress the need to combat any nationalist, racist or xenophobic tendencies, and we firmly reject any attempt to equate terrorism with the Arab or Muslim world.

The task awaiting us is of the utmost importance. The European Union is convinced that together and speaking with one voice, through our joint efforts and our common will, we will realize our goal: to eradicate the scourge of terrorism, in order to preserve humankind, as well our common values and liberties, from its odious ravages.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): A year ago, during the Millennium Summit, here in the Assembly and in this very city — which has been so sorely tried but is still upright and more determined than ever in the face of adversity — we made a solemn commitment to build for future generations a world free of fear, hunger and ignorance. This was, no doubt, a magnificent show of generosity and solidarity. What could be more uplifting for humankind to share the same dreams and the same hopes?

Indeed, the compassion and the sincere and spontaneous outpouring of sympathy from peoples throughout the world for the victims of the terrible attacks on New York and Washington have shown that we are more than ever linked by a common destiny and that, in difficult times, we know how to transcend our differences. That is why, when terrorists struck the United States — and every time they strike elsewhere — the target is that sacrosanct link we all have to the same human family.

It is thus important and necessary that, in the aftermath of the horrible terrorist attacks which have plunged not only the American nation but the entire human family into mourning, that the General Assembly — as the Security Council has done — vigorously condemn these heinous acts.

Today, now that it has understood the true nature of terrorism and the seriousness of the threat it poses to all of humankind — without any distinction as to race, culture or religion — it is imperative that the Assembly, which has decided to deal directly with this crucial issue, adopt as soon as possible a concerted, well-thought-out strategy and agree on the ways which will enable it to triumph over this new scourge of modern times.

Who other than this Organization, which comprises all of the nations of the world, has the legitimacy, the political determination and the necessary capacity to wage this campaign successfully?

Let me note, however, that it has taken many innocent victims and many isolated struggles — including that which my country has waged for many years now — for us finally to become aware of the fact that terrorism is not inherent to a particular area of the world but is a global threat to which no country is

immune. Putting an end to terrorism will require the mobilization and commitment of all nations of the world.

If there is an observation to be made following the terrible attacks of 11 September, it is that terrorism — above and beyond what we might have feared or imagined — has been able to adapt itself to the political, economic and technological changes that the world has seen in recent years. It has taken full advantage of the fresh prospects offered by globalization in terms of the free movement of individuals, goods, ideas and capital. It has been able also to use to its benefit the knowledge and the communications facilities that new information technologies have made available to all of us. Finally, it has been able to establish and consolidate its links with international crime, which for its part, thanks to globalization, has been able to develop its methods and increase its capacity for action.

What the international community is henceforth facing is terrorism of a new type. This new terrorism has sophisticated means and methods; it is organized into a myriad of cells and support or action networks, which have joined up and formed an alliance with drug-trafficking and money-laundering circles; it has unlimited financial resources at its disposal; and it will stop at nothing in the all-out war it has declared against all of humankind.

In face of such a challenge, the international community is in duty bound to present a common front, to join ranks and to act with determination in a fight that will be lengthy and costly but that we must win.

What form should this fight take? How should we conduct it? What are the objectives we should assign ourselves? What are the means to be mobilized in order for it to succeed? These are the questions we must ask ourselves and to which we must respond collectively, in a spirit of solidarity and with the determination that the scope of the challenge requires of us.

This fight must take on various forms, which all must find their place and their full expression in a renewed, strengthened and broadened international cooperation involving all international actors, and which the United Nations must plan and implement. In this decisive struggle, States, international, intergovernmental and regional organizations, financial and business circles, civil society and the media must become involved, and each and every one must discharge its role and live up to its responsibilities.

The objectives are clear. We must eradicate terrorism in all of its forms and endeavour to root it out by attacking resolutely both its manifestations and the support for it — be it overt or covert — as well as its underlying causes and its roots. We must not declare war against any individual people, religion, culture or civilization, especially given that terrorism, like extremism and fanaticism, is not characteristic of any one determined religion or civilization but is, unfortunately, a universal evil. Terrorism must be understood, therefore, in its universality; no selective or differentiated approach, depending on the location or on its victims, can be taken. In order to be effective and consensus-based, the fight against this phenomenon cannot be limited simply to an instrumental policy, and approaches that could entail disastrous consequences for relations between peoples and civilizations cannot be tolerated.

With respect to the measures to be taken, it is vital once and for all to adapt official anti-terrorist rhetoric to the reality on the ground, and to call on those who have been lax with regard to terrorism to henceforth speak with determination and to honour the commitments they have entered into.

From this standpoint, we believe that the time has come for all States the world over to take a zero-tolerance approach to terrorists. Until recently, terrorists had been abusing the right of asylum that had been generously granted them on the basis of a certain view of human rights, and they had been claiming responsibility, with full impunity, for their crimes from major world capitals, where they had found refuge and sometimes were even prospering.

Moreover, the 12 international instruments on terrorism must be scrupulously implemented and the countries that have not yet done so must ratify the various conventions as soon as possible, including those on bombings and on the financing of terrorism.

We should also provide countries victims of terrorism with the appropriate means and equipment to enable them effectively to combat terrorism. We should reserve the same treatment meted out to those who carry out terrorist acts for their commanders and accomplices, regardless of where such acts occur and the nationality of the guilty.

Finally, we must urgently adopt collective measures that should be implemented without delay, particularly with regard to judicial cooperation and the exchange of information between the services concerned, including banking, and we must strengthen Interpol's capacity to act. All of this will allow us to act firmly, diligently and effectively against the logistical, financial, political and arms-supply support networks of terrorist groups established in various countries throughout the world.

From this standpoint, my delegation welcomed the adoption by the Security Council on 28 September of a briskly worded resolution against terrorism and calls for the strict implementation of measures set forth therein, especially those concerning the financing of terrorist acts, active or passive support for terrorist groups and the prevention of terrorist acts through the exchange of information, the denial of safe haven to those who commit, plan, finance or support terrorist acts, the use of any other's territory for the financing, planning or preparation of terrorist acts, the monitoring of borders to prevent the passage of terrorists and the denial of asylum or political refugee status to those involved in terrorist acts.

On a different level, that of international law, there is an entire panoply of legal instruments that serve as a normative basis for all efforts to codify or draft a common global anti-terrorism strategy. This arsenal has been strengthened at the international level in recent years, especially within the United Nations, where a series of conventions have been negotiated and finalized. The most recent of these are the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, whose entry into force must now be accelerated. Negotiations are under way on the draft comprehensive convention submitted by the delegation of India, which enjoys our full support, given that it fully reflects the Algerian call for a global convention on terrorism in all its aspects and in all its forms and manifestations and that it would complete the existing arsenal in this regard and offer a juridical framework broad enough to cover the various aspects of the terrorist phenomenon. This text also ensures a holistic and consistent approach to all terrorist acts, instead of the piecemeal and fragmentary approach taken to date.

This draft is founded on the general principle of "prosecute or extradite" and on that of the depoliticization of terrorist acts. It seeks to prevent such acts, whatever their specifics and particular characteristics, and to take on new forms of terrorism that have not been foreseen in the existing sectoral conventions. It not only fills the gaps in the current legal framework, but is also innovative in extending its scope of implementation to threats of terrorist acts and to acts in preparation, which are not covered by certain sectoral conventions.

My country urges all countries to cooperate to ensure that this important legal instrument can be adopted, if possible, at this session. No one should assume the political or moral responsibility of hindering the completion and adoption of that instrument, which the international community so sorely needs.

Unilateral and even bilateral or regional action is insufficient, as we have said, to fight this global menace. It is possible to wage an effective fight against terrorism only through the joint, coordinated action of States within the framework of the United Nations, which, given its universality, is in the best position to coordinate the activities of Member States in this sphere. The General Assembly has indeed shown the way by adopting, on 9 December 1994, the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, the importance of which has been continuously reaffirmed ever since. The United Nations should continue to play a more dynamic role in promoting international cooperation in the prevention and suppression of terrorist acts. In this regard, my country fully supports the proposal to convene, under United Nations auspices, a high-level conference to draft an organized and joint response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

The fight against terrorism has made equally significant progress in regional bodies. In this regard, my country believes that regional consultations and cooperation are essential to establishing effective security and juridical arrangements to complement international efforts. In this respect, we are pleased to note that such cooperation is beginning to take shape in the Mediterranean.

Identical efforts, in which my country has actively participated and which it has sometimes initiated or called for, have been made in the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which have

drafted anti-terrorism instruments that my country has signed and ratified.

Algeria is firmly committed to the campaign against terrorism, entertains no ambivalence on the issue and is a party to almost every international convention on terrorism. We intend to pursue the fight against this scourge with determination, in strict respect for our national laws and the principles and norms of international law. We also intend to involve ourselves fully in cooperation at every level: bilateral, regional and international.

In conclusion, I wish to stress our special interest in the debate beginning today, which we expect to end with an unequivocal condemnation of terrorism and with concrete commitments to fighting it. Not to do so, and failing to take advantage of the incredible new awareness of the true nature of terrorism that arose from the tragic events of 11 September, would send the wrong signal to terrorists and their leaders. We do not have the right to fail, out of respect for the hundreds of thousands of victims of terrorism and out of duty to our children, whom we must protect from this scourge of modern times.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): The terrorist attacks against New York and Washington are a crime against humanity. I would like to express my deepest sympathy to the victims, to their families and friends and to the American people.

Terrorism is a crime against the innocent. The purpose of terrorism is to spread fear and destruction. The random selection of victims is the very essence of terror; it can strike at any place and at any time. Terrorism transcends national borders; it strikes at the core of the values that we hold to be universal, independent of our belief systems and religious affiliations.

Just as the people of New York stood united in grief, bravery and determination, so must we, the international community, stand united in confronting international terrorism. We must bring the criminals responsible for these abhorrent acts to justice.

The killing and maiming of innocent people are universally condemned. That is why an attack against one must be considered as an attack against us all. That is why we must make the fight against international terrorism our common cause. International terrorism is a threat to international peace and security. International law confirms the right to self-defence. Norway is fully committed to contributing to the broad alliance that is now forming.

Our war on terrorism must be fought on many fronts. A comprehensive strategy must include military, political, diplomatic, legal and economic means. As the only Organization with universal membership and a comprehensive agenda, the United Nations must assume the responsibility for elaborating a broad long-term strategy for combating international terrorism. Norway will participate actively in this work.

Intensified and concerted international efforts are needed to effectively seek out and hold accountable those who support, harbour and protect terrorists, and to prevent any future assaults. There can be no sanctuary for terrorists. We welcome and strongly support Security Council resolution 1368 (2001), which reconfirms the right to individual or collective self-defence. We further welcome Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted last week, which contains clear steps and measures that all States Members of the United Nations must now implement in order to prevent and suppress terrorist activities.

The competent organs of the United Nations, as well as regional organizations, must consolidate and further develop international mechanisms that will enhance our collective capacity to fight impunity. It is against this background that Norway has called for the speedy establishment of the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

It is equally important that the financial networks feeding the terrorists are cut off. Norway has ratified all the United Nations conventions against international terrorism that are in force. Later today, we will sign the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

International terrorism is also closely linked to organized crime. The early entry into force of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime will be important in impairing the financing of terrorist networks. In order to remove this threat, the international community must redouble its efforts aimed at eliminating the known breeding grounds of terrorism: violent conflict, poverty, intolerance and religious fanaticism.

We must strive for democratization and for universal adherence to human rights. We must redouble

our efforts to fight poverty and social exclusion and to promote good governance. We must move to implement the action plan agreed at the Millennium Summit last year. Globalization must be made into a vehicle for growth and prosperity for all nations and all people.

The humanitarian tragedy now unfolding in and around Afghanistan is a direct result of these terrorist attacks. Our response must include protection of, and assistance to, the many victims. Norway is considering positively the United Nations appeal for increased humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, to be discussed in Geneva on Thursday. Norway has also urged the donor group for Afghanistan to mobilize additional resources to aid the people of Afghanistan.

Out of the ashes — a few blocks from where we are gathered — we have witnessed the rise of an international coalition of nations truly united in the quest for peace and security. If the intention of the terrorists was to split the international community, the opposite has been achieved. We will not succumb to terror and fear. We will stand united and we will win the war on international terrorism.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): The start of the new millennium has been marred by a tragedy of enormous proportions. The terrorist attacks of 11 September, aimed primarily against civilians, have become a direct challenge not only to the people of the United States, but to the entire civilized world. Those responsible have put themselves beyond the laws of human civilization and deserve a just and inevitable punishment. Ukraine, together with other nations of the world, mourns the victims of the attacks and expresses its full solidarity with the people of the United States. By joining the international anti-terrorist coalition, my country has confirmed its readiness to do its utmost in the global effort to eliminate this scourge. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the proposal made by my delegation to declare the tragic day of 11 September an "International Day to Combat Terrorism".

The brutality and scale of the 11 September terrorist attacks have profoundly changed our perception of the global challenges facing mankind. Despite all the imperfections and built-in weaknesses of our increasingly globalized world, the international community cannot afford to remain ill-prepared and ill-equipped in the face of new threats. Fully acknowledging the magnitude and implications of the recent events, Member States and policy makers must develop new definitions, new terms and new strategies to stand up to new realities.

Last week the Security Council adopted a historic resolution designed to enhance the international response to threats of terrorism. It is a timely and necessary measure. In our view, its full implementation will give a strong impetus to our fight against terrorism. The complex character of the tasks put forward by the Council will compel Member States to constantly revisit the progress of their implementation. I am sure that the views expressed during the current debate will provide valuable guidance to the Security Council in its further work. It would also be worthwhile to consider convening a ministerial meeting of the Council, specifically during the forthcoming general debate in the Assembly, to discuss the next steps.

Today terrorists are using new and sophisticated means to commit their hateful acts. One can imagine the consequences if tomorrow they get hold of weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological, or use computer technologies to disrupt the daily activities of society. That could well be the next stage, and it might bring about a catastrophe of global proportions. Ukraine therefore considers that the problems of the non-proliferation of weapons such as those I have mentioned, their means of delivery and related technologies acquire additional significance. Measures to combat computer terrorism should also be properly reflected in future legal instruments.

Ukraine has repeatedly condemned, in the strongest possible terms, international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We have consistently supported the concerted efforts by the United Nations to eradicate this crime. My country has ratified most of the instruments of universal character in this field. Last year, Ukraine signed the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing is to be ratified in the near future. We consider the adherence and the full implementation of the relevant international instruments by Member States to be an essential contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. We also hope that negotiations on two new universal instruments in this field will be concluded shortly. At the same time, we realize that legal instruments alone

are not sufficient; there is a need for a strong commitment by States and genuine cooperation between Governments and their law enforcement agencies in fighting terrorism.

Terrorist attacks constitute a clear violation of recognized norms of international law. Their main purpose is to undermine international stability and to provoke a vicious circle of violence in international or inter-ethnic relations. The world community should not, in any circumstances, give way to such provocations. All national and international means of combating and suppressing terrorism are necessary tools that may be used for this purpose.

Of particular concern is the fact that terrorist organizations are financed through other criminal activities, including arms smuggling, drug production and trafficking, and money laundering. It is regrettable that the treatment of these diseases lags far behind the challenges they represent. It is our deep conviction that an increased international effort towards their virtual elimination would also be instrumental in our fight against terrorism.

What happened in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania last month incontestably proves that no State — big or small, rich or poor — can feel safe against the threat of terrorism, which knows no boundaries and makes no distinction between children and military targets, or between diplomatic and humanitarian missions. Nor should any State be left alone in its struggle against terrorism. As the Mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, has just mentioned, it is only through the concerted efforts of the international community as a whole that we can effectively withstand this challenge.

The role of this Organization will become even more crucial in setting new frameworks for cooperation in this field. We welcome the recent adoption by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice of a set of recommendations on specific national and international actions against terrorism. At the same time, my delegation is convinced that the enhancing of the potential of the United Nations in fighting international terrorism can still go beyond the task of merely strengthening the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. We continue to maintain that there is a need for proper institutional arrangements to coordinate the individual efforts of Member States in combating international terrorism and to ensure that the legal instruments we elaborated are implemented in the most efficient manner. We fully realize that more time is needed to consider this idea, and we hope that the Assembly will come back to this matter in due time.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): The decision by the General Assembly to convene this important meeting in the aftermath of the recent horrific events in the United States of America is testimony to our collective determination to bring an immediate end to terrorism.

On behalf of the South African Government and people, I wish to extend again our sincerest condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America, and to other Governments and people directly affected by the tragic events of 11 September 2001.

As a result of these tragic events, President Thabo Mbeki and the South African cabinet issued a statement on 19 September 2001 reflecting the position of the South African Government, which I would like to read to you:

> "First, South Africa condemns terrorism without any equivocation. Attacks against civilians cannot be justified. This approach is integral to the humanitarian values that inspired our struggle and governed its conduct. These principles inform the core values of our constitution.
>
> "Secondly, South Africa will cooperate with all efforts to apprehend the culprits and bring them to book. Justice must be done and it must be seen to be done.
>
> "Thirdly, South Africa therefore recognizes the right of the United States Government to track down the culprits and bring them to justice. Any action taken should be informed by thorough investigations and incontrovertible evidence.
>
> "Fourthly, acts of vengeance or mobilization directed against individuals, communities or nations simply because of their faith, language or colour cannot be justified. They go against the humanitarian and civilized norms that the terrorists seek to undermine and destroy. They can, in fact, play into the hands of these wicked forces. Whatever the pain the world may be going through, we should avoid temptations of racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and any other forms

of prejudice and discrimination that the recent World Conference against Racism so eloquently warned against.

"Fifthly, the world should unite in the fight against terrorism. In this effort, the immediate task is to ensure that the perpetrators meet their just desserts. In the medium term, the challenge is to understand the root causes of these despicable acts and to eradicate them worldwide.

"Sixthly, in the least, the terrorists should be isolated through international cooperation to build an equitable world order. This medium-term challenge includes concerted efforts to resolve conflicts in all parts of the globe, including the search for lasting peace in the Middle East. It includes a joint commitment throughout the world to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment.

"The concrete actions are as follows:

"South Africa has, like many other countries, offered such support and assistance as may be required and within the limits of our capacity. Morally and spiritually, we are the victims, as well as the people and Government of the United States and other nations that lost their citizens in these events.

"Government, through its mission in the United States, and working with relevant United States authorities, is continuing the search for South Africans who have not as yet been traced, who may have been in the hijacked planes or in the vicinity of the affected areas.

"To the extent that the current investigations into these acts of terror may require concrete intelligence information that South Africa may have at its disposal, our security agencies will continue to cooperate with their United States counterparts.

"South Africa has not considered any military involvement in the operations envisaged by the United States Administration. The matter has not been raised; and, within the context of our approach to both the immediate and longer-term challenges in dealing with the scourge of terrorism, the issue does not arise.

"South Africa will take part in discussions on the course of world action on this issue, within the context of regional and other multilateral organizations to which we belong, including the United Nations. Further, working together with other countries within the United Nations system, we will continue to make our contribution to the development of relevant international conventions on the fight against terrorism.

"Our approach to this matter is informed by our values as a nation; and Government is of the full conviction that it is in the national interest."

South Africa, like all United Nations Members, is still examining the very wide-ranging implications of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which was adopted over the weekend.

In closing, let me take this opportunity to reiterate that South Africa is committed to working closely with the Security Council and with the United Nations General Assembly in order to ensure a concerted response to the challenge of seeking appropriate means to eliminate the common scourge of international terrorism.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): We are all honoured that Mayor Giuliani joined the Secretary-General and ourselves to open the debate this morning and to inspire us with his call for unity against terrorism. Though we in this Assembly come from all quarters of the globe, New York is our — the United Nations — city. We suffer with, and for, the victims of 11 September and their families: New Yorkers, Americans and citizens of more than 80 other countries. And we pay tribute to the heroes who gave their lives trying to save others.

As Prime Minister Blair told the British Parliament three days later, the crime of 11 September was

> "an act of wickedness for which there can never be justification. Whatever the cause, whatever the perversion of religious feeling, whatever the political belief, to inflict such terror on the world, to take the lives of so many innocent and defenceless men, women and children can never be justified".

With the smoke still rising from the ruins of the World Trade Center, we must now act quickly, resolutely and collectively to make sure such outrages are prevented in future. Terrorists operate without regard for borders or the citizenship of their victims

and so the fight against terrorism has to be a global one. Organizing this global response must be central to our efforts at the United Nations.

The Security Council has already responded. First, in resolution 1368 (2001), to condemn the recent attacks as attacks on the United States and on international peace and security, and to express the Council's readiness to take steps in response. Secondly, in its ambitious resolution 1373 (2001), to set out the measures which we must all now take to prevent and combat terrorists wherever they are found. We must all take steps, nationally and jointly, to prevent the flow of finance and funds to terrorists; to stop terrorists from crossing borders; to apprehend them; to put them on trial or extradite them to countries that will put them on trial; to share information; and to cease to tolerate States or entities that support or protect terrorists.

But this is just the start. Now it is time for the General Assembly to act. While we, as the Members of the United Nations, must act collectively through the General Assembly and the Security Council, we as Member States must also act nationally and individually. The United Kingdom strongly supports the Secretary-General's call this morning for a broad coalition against terrorism. Encouraged and coordinated by the work of the General Assembly, every State should ratify the existing 12 United Nations and international conventions against terrorism, in particular the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which the United Kingdom ratified in February 2001. Secondly, work must be accelerated on the draft global terrorism and nuclear terrorism conventions, which are under negotiation here in the General Assembly. We should set firm benchmarks for a conclusion of the negotiations. As a first step, the Ad Hoc Committee should report by mid-November on progress in negotiating the global convention. And the Assembly should take stock again itself before the end of the year. Thirdly, we must each take steps to ensure that those responsible for aiding, supporting or harbouring terrorists are held accountable. Fourthly, we must each reinforce and extend international cooperation arrangements in the field of justice, policing and law enforcement.

This is a considerable agenda for the Assembly, over and above the obligations set out in Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). A road map is taking shape for each individual Member State. All States owe it to the victims of the terrorist atrocities to implement these measures. A number of them are already in force in the United Kingdom through the Terrorism Act 2000, the United Kingdom's tough anti-terrorism law passed in February of this year. We are, nonetheless, considering urgently what further changes in domestic legislation may be required in responding to resolution 1373 (2001). We will certainly be willing also to respond to the Secretary-General's call this morning to assist others to react swiftly to that resolution and to develop the cooperative effort necessary.

National efforts must, however, be welded into a global framework. With our partners in the European Union, we will pursue collective European action across all our territories, as the earlier address of the representative of Belgium set out on behalf of the European Union. The agreement of the European Union's Economic and Finance Ministers to rapid and coordinated initiatives to combat the financing of terrorism will in itself be an upfront contribution to meeting the objectives of resolution 1373 (2001).

Before concluding, let me touch on one controversial area where this Assembly has a job to do. Increasingly, questions are being raised about the problem of the definition of a terrorist. Let us be wise and focused about this. Terrorism is terrorism. It uses violence to kill and damage indiscriminately to make a political or cultural point and to influence legitimate Governments or public opinion unfairly and amorally.

There is common ground among all of us on what constitutes terrorism. What looks, smells and kills like terrorism is terrorism. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) sets out clear, urgent and acceptable measures for every Member State to deal with it, collectively, under the aegis of the United Nations.

But there are also wars and armed struggles where actions can be characterized, for metaphorical and rhetorical force, as terrorist. This is a highly controversial and subjective area, on which, because of the legitimate spectrum of viewpoints within the United Nations membership, we will never reach full consensus.

War in human history has, for the most part, thank goodness, engaged human honour: there are rules. At the edges, dishonourable actions may share some of the characteristics of terrorism. Let the corpus of international humanitarian law deal with that. Our job now is to confront and eradicate terrorism pure and

simple: the use of violence without honour, discrimination or regard for human decency. In following up the implementation of Friday's Security Council resolution, the 1373 Committee must focus on what we all agree is terrorism without subjective interpretation, and filter out prejudice and unilateralism. That will be the approach of the United Kingdom.

One last point. There is a humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, made worse by the instability engendered by the attacks of 11 September. Already severe, the crisis is likely to get worse in the coming weeks. The people of Afghanistan have already suffered too much from the appalling Taliban regime. Our justified focus in combating terrorism must not divert us from acting to help the Afghan people when they need us. The United Kingdom has in recent days disbursed $40 million to this cause, and more is in the pipeline. I urge every one of us to support the Secretary-General's appeal for funds, not with pledges, but with cash now. That need, too, is acute and urgent.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): It is clear that the General Assembly decided to hold a specific debate today on terrorism because of the tragic events of 11 September 2001, whose universal consequences and repercussions will long affect the human conscience.

It is often said that repetition is confirmation. My country wishes to reiterate to the Government and the people of the United States, and more generally to the countries and families that are also victims of this tragedy, its great sorrow and profound compassion.

In the face of such a disaster, it is hardly necessary to recall the importance and the relevance of our debate today. From the outset, it is fitting to recall that this is not the first time the international community has had to address the question of terrorism. In fact, the first international Convention on terrorism dates back to 1963. So far 171 countries — in other words, almost all the Member States of our Organization — have become parties to that Convention, signed in Tokyo, whose objective is to combat offences and certain other acts committed on board aircraft. Many other conventions, such as those of The Hague, Montreal, New York, Rome, Vienna and so forth, have strengthened the legal arsenal established in order to thwart international terrorism. In addition to those preventive legal measures, the question regularly appears on the agenda of the Sixth Committee. Unfortunately, it must be recognized that, even with such a structure in place, what we are dealing with is a shadowy, changing phenomenon, which recalls the myth of Sisyphus, for the fight against terrorism requires eternally starting again.

In fact, despite all the Draconian measures taken in airports, on aircraft and ships, in diplomatic premises and elsewhere, terrorists operate with particularly disconcerting ease and even sophistication. The commanders and the operators seem together to have designed strategies and methods that our societies cannot stop. Worse, a new type of terrorism has just emerged that is as dangerous as it is treacherous: the suicide attack. The struggle against this kind of terror is yet more formidable.

We are well aware of this. More than two weeks after the tragic events, the United States and the world coalition against terrorism are still hesitating, because it is difficult to identify the real originators, and they do not know precisely against whom to take reprisals. Even if the guilty were clearly identified, how is it possible to get to them without hitting innocent people?

The futility of the anti-missile shield is becoming obvious, since no State, even the most powerful, can feel protected, certain of invulnerability. The anti-missile shield is conceivable as long as the missiles come directly from outside, from an adversary in a specific geographical location or one that is clearly identifiable. But when that adversary attacks from within the victim's territory, using its own infrastructures, as was the case on 11 September, the counter-offensive is rarely productive. What can really be done against someone who considers death to be the just price of a mission accepted as a vocation and as a guarantee of eternal happiness?

The big question before us today, therefore, is what can be done to eradicate an elusive evil.

In our humble opinion, the first requirement is that all States have the same definition and the same understanding of terrorism. Unfortunately, what do we see? Depending on their interests, States do not have the same concept or the same view of terrorism and of relations with terrorists. What is described as a terrorist act in one State will be interpreted as a nationalist claim in another. Does that mean that we are to believe that there are good and bad terrorists? The need to speak the same language is therefore the sine qua non

for victory over international terrorism, because for this struggle to be effective it can brook no exception or compromise. From this standpoint, it seems that the tragedy of 11 September has harmonized and unified views.

The second lesson to be learned is that the terrorist phenomenon cannot be effectively combated without a broad-based anti-terrorist fight; in other words, with international cooperation in all areas — political, economic, financial, legislative, legal and so forth. That presupposes as a first obligation that all States adhere to the various international treaties and protocols on terrorism. Such unanimity would greatly contribute to defusing the terrorist bomb.

I wish also to place emphasis on the preventive struggle, which requires cooperation in information gathering and investigation. In our globalized world, national interests cannot be conceived in isolation. Under United Nations auspices, a very high-level conference could be convened to explore all possibilities for an effective fight against this evil of the century.

Lastly, it seems to us that the international community must take fully into account the human dimension of the problem. Suicide attacks are clearly the expression of a despair linked to certain frustrations, such as a sense of injustice, imprisonment in poverty and powerlessness in the face of arrogance and repression. Psychologists tell us that the act of compensating for such frustrations knows no scruples. It is therefore obviously the humanization of international relations that is called for. We must see to it that the less powerful and those left aside are also considered and respected. Let us therefore work towards the building of a more just and humane world. If others feel that they are heard and understood, there will be no reason for them to take the path of violence.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Burkina Faso is prepared, together with the other nations of the world, to categorically say no to terrorism and to close off the terrorists' path once and for all.

Mr. Ling (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the decision of the most representative body of the United Nations and your personal efforts, Mr. President, to place the fight against international terrorism among the main and most urgent items on the agenda. There is no doubt that this will allow us to define the most effective and timely steps for counteracting any manifestations of terrorism in the modern world.

The shock caused by the barbarity and cruelty of the acts of terrorism committed in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania on 11 September this year will long remain a part of the everyday life of peoples of the civilized world. The acts of terrorism in the United States took many innocent civilian victims and constituted a challenge to the entire international community by those who are striving to rule the world and achieve political, religious, ethnic and other goals with terror and force, in violation of the main principles of the United Nations.

The people, President and Government of the Republic of Belarus immediately responded to the tragic events, sharing in the general grief of the American people and sincerely offering their condolences to the families of the people who died as a result of the recent events.

It is important that the grief of humankind and memory of lost lives form the basis for efficient measures to be taken by the international community against acts of international terrorism, which have become a shocking reality of the modern world. We are convinced that the United Nations, as a unique and the largest forum of nations, must take the lead in the process of devising such measures. We are convinced that only under such conditions will there be the necessary restraint and responsibility for the future of civilization, in full observance of the Charter, which the overwhelming majority of world's States has promised to respect. The collective wisdom of the United Nations, which takes into consideration the opinions and experience of various peoples and is based on the constructive dialogue of civilizations, will allow us to come up with the necessary measures under the present circumstances.

Belarus is convinced that the response of the international community should be directed at the perpetrators and organizers of the acts of terrorism that were committed — terrorist organizations and their sponsors, not entire countries and peoples. Only such an approach will allow us to avoid the loss of more civilian victims and make the process of responding a managed and therefore predictable one. The decision to use military force in response to the terrorist activities of certain States, if there is sufficient proof of their

carrying out and promoting such activities, must be well founded and in accordance with provisions of the Charter. The possibility of any military intervention to combat international terrorism on the territories of other States today can and must be considered from the point of view of threats to international peace and security, exclusively by the Security Council, which has been given authority for this under the Charter. Belarus welcomes the steps that have already been taken in this field by the Council and supports the provisions of resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September, one of whose measures provides for the establishment of a Committee of the Security Council to combat terrorism. We believe that this measure, together with other measures provided for under the resolution, will make it possible to create a necessary, permanent, effective mechanism of the Security Council for fighting terrorism. Such a mechanism should begin to function as quickly as possible if the work of the Council as a whole is to be effective.

The events in the largest cities of the United States of America confirm the deep concern about the increasing scope of the means of spreading acts of terrorism in the world. The acquisition by terrorists of new types of weapons and advanced scientific and technological means, as well as the internalization of many aspects of international life, lead to circumstances under which international terrorism is becoming a global problem of the modern world and one of the main threats to the peaceful development of humankind in the twenty-first century.

The Republic of Belarus, which has suffered greatly several times in its history from the consequences of treacherous attacks and wars, resolutely condemns international terrorism, including State terrorism, and consistently advocates expanding cooperation to combat this social ill, which cannot be justified under any circumstances. For Belarus, which is situated at the crossroads of the main European and world trade routes, the problem of fighting terrorism has an everyday, practical dimension.

Our State is a party to all the main international treaties on the struggle against terrorism that are currently in force. The Republic of Belarus undertook the appropriate steps to become a party to two new United Nations conventions in the field — the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. It is deeply symbolic that just today, 1 October, the Republic of Belarus deposited with the Secretary-General its instrument of ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. The Republic of Belarus plans to sign the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism during this session of the General Assembly. Foreign-policy support for the anti-terrorist struggle is harmoniously being carried out and coordinated with the domestic policy of the Belarusian State on combating terrorism and crime in general, which is based on progressive international experience.

From this podium, we associate ourselves with the appeal to States that have not yet done so to become parties to all the anti-terrorist conventions. We are convinced that the implementation of these conventions by the overwhelming majority of States will provide an opportunity to organize action against terrorism throughout the world and contribute to its elimination.

To increase the efficacy of the implementation of the anti-terrorist conventions and to involve the United Nations more broadly in suppressing terrorism, we consider it worthwhile to establish, on the basis of an appropriate resolution of the General Assembly, a United Nations centre for combating terrorism, with responsibility for ensuring that States parties fulfil their obligations within the framework of these treaties and also, through the Secretary-General, giving them help in promoting collaboration on preventing and fighting terrorism. We propose that such a centre have special subdivisions for preventing terrorism and for fact-finding, as well as for operational responses to terrorist activities.

The establishment of such an anti-terrorist centre by the General Assembly, which is composed of all the Members of the United Nations, would be a substantial addition to the measures undertaken by the Security Council in combating terrorism and would promote the broadest interaction possible within the framework of the United Nations on the issue. The General Assembly has the necessary authority, under Article 11 of the Charter, to take such a decision.

The Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 on 17 December 1996, which is also preparing a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, would be a proper forum to discuss the above initiative.

The Republic of Belarus would like to express its hope that, in the light of the terrible events of 11 September 2001, the Ad Hoc Committee will accelerate the preparation of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and make progress in setting dates to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to adopt the comprehensive convention and to formulate a joint organized response on the part of the international community to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

In conclusion, we would like to say that, in our view, the fight against terrorism will be effective only if the international community adheres to the following main approaches.

First, terrorism is a negative social phenomenon and is unjustifiable on any grounds, be it on political, religious, ethnic or any other grounds. It will be universally condemned.

Secondly, individuals guilty of organizing, committing and financing acts of terrorism must inevitably be punished. That also includes extradition to States with grounds to prosecute those persons in accordance with their criminal laws.

Thirdly, peacekeeping operations are needed in all regions of the world to prevent conflicts that give rise to acts of terrorism.

Fourthly, countermeasures against terrorism will comply strictly with the United Nations Charter and norms of international law.

Fifthly, cooperation and mutual confidence will be strengthened among countries to eliminate terrorism.

Sixthly, there should be universal adherence to existing treaties to combat internal terrorism. New treaties should also be developed at the multilateral, regional and bilateral levels.

We are convinced that, given the consensus in the General Assembly and the steps taken by the Security Council, there are grounds to be optimistic about the implementation of these measures. The Government of the Republic of Belarus will contribute to that to the maximum extent possible.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly is meeting today under the shadow of the horrific tragedy that continues to loom large over this great city and, in fact, over the skies of this friendly country and, I might add, the skies of the entire world. We condemn that crime. The criminal terrorist acts have highlighted shortcomings to us in Egypt, both with regard to the new measures that the international community must put in place and with regard to old measures that must be taken out of mothballs to reinvigorate ways and means to combat and root out terrorism.

Those acts have also proven that all States and peoples, irrespective of their political systems or geographic locations, are vulnerable to terrorist attacks. Those who struck the World Trade Center and other targets did not injure the United States and its people alone. They committed murder against the nationals of over 60 States, including Egypt. Furthermore, the attacks violated the principles observed by the international community and all of humanity, principles enshrined in all religions and cultures, especially in the Islamic faith.

Today we are debating the agenda item entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", as well as discussing the report of the Secretary-General on those measures. In that regard, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report. We note with satisfaction his efforts to carry out the functions mandated to him by the General Assembly in combating terrorism. We would like to refer in particular to his efforts to ensure coordination between the specialized agencies of the United Nations and other international organizations.

We would also like to express our satisfaction with the contents of the report regarding the increasing number of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to conventions to combat terrorism. We take this opportunity to invite States that have not yet done so to follow that example, in an effort to ensure that the legal instruments to combat terrorism attain universality. I would also like to take this opportunity to recall that Egypt has submitted data for all Member States regarding the measures it has taken at the national, regional and international levels to prevent and suppress international terrorism.

Egypt was one of the leading States to sound the alarm of the advent of the new criminal phenomenon of international terrorism on the international scene. Egypt led, and continues to lead, a long and sustained campaign against terrorism at all levels.

In the national sphere, Egypt spared no administrative or legislative efforts to suppress terrorism by enforcing national plans at the cultural, social, economic and security levels. Regionally, Egypt was a driving force behind the conclusion of the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and the two conventions to combat international terrorism adopted within the framework of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). At the international level, Egypt has signed, ratified or acceded to 14 international and regional agreements, all of which are considered enforceable domestic law in my country. Egypt also participates actively in all ongoing negotiations aimed at drafting new provisions to suppress this heinous phenomenon.

The Security Council adopted an enormously significant resolution on the evening of 28 September, one that enjoyed the unanimous approval of the members of the Council. We support its provisions and general framework. We shall follow closely reactions and analyses in that regard and monitor the moves of the Council in its methodology and implementation of the resolution.

In particular, our attention was drawn to the affirmation in the resolution — which we support — to refrain from providing safe haven to fugitives implicated in acts of terrorism. We were also struck by the provision that maintains that claims of political motivation are not recognized as grounds for refusing requests for the extradition of alleged terrorists. Egypt has had bitter experiences with regard to that particular point. For quite some time, Egypt has cautioned against harbouring fugitive terrorists wanted under the jurisdiction of our laws. Unfortunately, we see today the invalidity of the positions and approaches of the States that denied extradition. It is our great hope that all States will comply fully with all the provisions of the resolution.

But we continue to have serious questions about the resolution that we must pursue. One has to do with the components of the mandate given to the Committee charged with implementation formed under the resolution. What are the mechanisms, mandates and powers of that Committee? What is the dividing line between its role in monitoring and its ability to act? What are the implications of the resolution on the series of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council itself in this regard, not to mention international conventions dealing with the issue? There are many other points that will require clarification, especially with regard to the contractual obligations in place among States under other international laws and national legislation. We have listened closely and with appreciation to the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom in this regard.

The war against terrorism requires an enormously wide range of tools in the legal, economic, social and cultural spheres, to name but a few. It is certain, however, that the political dimensions and root causes of terrorism must be at the centre of our focus if international action against this pernicious evil is to be effective.

Unambiguously, candidly, sincerely and without equivocation, I wish to stress that the question of Palestine is first among the political and humanitarian issues that must be at the centre of our efforts. That question must be settled in a fair manner that restores the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people. Let me add that the thinking among certain parties in Israel that there is now an opportunity to crush Palestinian resistance to occupation by taking advantage of the conditions now gripping the entire world is a grave mistake that would have incalculable implications and dire consequences.

Using the religion or culture of Islam to justify terrorist crimes that harm innocent people is a cause for deep distress. But it is truly harmful, regrettable and disturbing that some groups and circles have quickly seized on these criminal terrorist acts to stigmatize a particular culture or civilization by name, or even to claim that one culture is superior to others. There is much that we could say on that subject, but I do not wish to diverge from the subject of today's debate. We intend, however, to address this issue at the appropriate time, and our carefully considered presentation will outline the depth of experience of civilizations, and the constructive role of dialogue among cultures.

In the wake of these perilous events, the President of Egypt, Mr. Hosni Mubarak, reiterated Egypt's initiative related to the convening within the framework of the United Nations of an international conference on terrorism. There is no doubt that world leaders' attendance at such a summit, at the proper time, with a view to sending a clear message in the fight against terrorism and to adopting a full range of

measures to eradicate that phenomenon, which spares no society, would be a great contribution to the fight against terrorism. It is time for the General Assembly, at this session, to adopt a resolution reviving the idea of such a conference, enacting measures to prepare for convening it at the proper time, and earnestly engaging in the preparatory work, which we believe would take some time. The most important thing now is to work in earnest to translate these ideas into reality.

In conclusion, we appreciate the importance of cooperation and coordination towards a systematic, collective, effective response in the United Nations framework, through a broad consensus on eradicating terrorism, and we call on all States to follow the example of those States that have already committed themselves to rooting out terrorism. Perhaps this session of the General Assembly will be an opportune occasion to begin an intense dialogue that will contribute to creating an integrated collective system to combat terrorism in the political, economic, technological and legal spheres, and to address the root causes that provide fertile soil for the spread of this phenomenon.

Mr. Šimonović (Croatia): On 11 September, while we were praying for global peace at an international prayer breakfast right here at United Nations Headquarters in New York, the twin towers were deliberately targeted and brought down. The peace bell that the Secretary-General should have rung that day remained silent. The next day it rang in memory of the unknown number of victims of the terrorist attacks. The terrorist attacks of 11 September were inflicted on parents, children, spouses, friends, neighbours, employees and citizens from more than 80 nations, some of them of Croatian ethnic origin as well. That crime against humanity, aimed at killing as many unknown persons as possible, was committed by a brutal and organized terrorist network.

My country recently went through war. The shock of unselective killings coupled with physical destruction, and the pictures of missing persons, are, unfortunately, all too familiar to us. However, this did not make us less, but rather more sensitive to the crimes committed in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. Once again we express our deepest condolences and profound solidarity to the families of the victims, to the American people and to the Government of the United States of America. Croatia is fully committed to fight terrorism until its extermination is complete.

The perpetrators of these crimes must be brought to justice and prevented from causing another tragedy. Our Charter indicates that terrorism is a threat to international peace and that every country has the solemn right to defend itself, its citizens and their peace and security. Therefore, such a right on the part the United States should not be questioned. Yet, as the Secretary-General put it so eloquently in his op-ed article in *The New York Times* of 21 September 2001, "The terrorists who attacked the United States on September 11 aimed at one nation but wounded an entire world". So the response to these acts should come from all over the world. Our motto in this challenging task should be: multilateralism against terrorism. We should set aside many of our differences and concentrate on a common goal: the global eradication of terrorism, once and for all.

What is the key role of the United Nations in this endeavour, and what can we expect from this debate? We strongly support the Secretary-General's view that the United Nations is uniquely positioned to advance the common fight against terrorism. Individual countries will be fighting terrorism in different ways, and will be entering different regional or other coalitions and arrangements against terrorism. However, it is vital to show that there is a clear common denominator against terrorism, and that basic values and commitments against terrorism are shared by all. The President of Croatia recently launched an appeal to make these core values and principles of the global coalition against terrorism transparent and explicit.

The fight against terrorism will be long and complex. We have to prosecute terrorists wherever they are, cut their financing and isolate countries that are aiding, supporting or harbouring them. To ensure the long-term eradication of terrorism, however, the fight against it must be accompanied by a fight against conditions which favour the spread of terrorism, such as long-lasting conflicts, unresolved crises, inequality, poverty, ignorance and injustice. Our overall success, therefore, relies heavily on coordinated efforts on the part of the principal organs of the United Nations, namely the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

We do not have much time. Our condemnation of terrorism should be swiftly transformed into practical steps against it. The 12 United Nations conventions against terrorism already provide a good framework for the prosecution and extradition of offenders and against money laundering. The Security Council resolution that was recently adopted will provide a major new impetus to this process, not only by taking a further step towards defining the obligations of countries in their cooperation against terrorism under Chapter VII, but also by establishing a mechanism for monitoring national implementation.

The Government of Croatia welcomes this far-reaching anti-terrorist resolution and intends to speed up ratification of the relevant United Nations anti-terrorist conventions to which it is not yet a party. It also expresses its readiness to fully cooperate in the implementation of various anti-terrorist international instruments and in practical activities to eradicate terrorism.

Croatia, as a party to the Rome Statute, also supports the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in its view that the new International Criminal Court is the appropriate institution to consider terrorist acts, when needed. With the establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court now in sight, it is encouraging to know that, even in the absence of an adequate response from some States, the international community will have the means to bring the perpetrators of these specific crimes against humanity to justice. The ongoing International Criminal Court Preparatory Committee is a welcome opportunity to discuss these pertinent legal issues.

My Government is committed to the fight against terrorism as an international evil, regardless of its perpetrators. Any attempt to equate terrorism with specific religious or ethnic groups is totally unacceptable to us. Throughout history, terrorists have called upon different religions or ideologies to embrace and justify their crimes.

Terrorism has always threatened humankind, but given current technological and scientific developments, the magnitude of the threat we face today is unprecedented. We were prevented from convening the special session of the General Assembly on children this September because of the terrorist attacks. Nevertheless, we now have a chance to do something of utmost importance for the future of our children: to commit ourselves to leave them a world free of terrorism. It will be a long and arduous battle, but our children's future rests upon it.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.